Mizoram	389.66
Nagaland	304.99
Tripura	11.50
TOTAL	2141.38

Entry of M/s. Nestle India Ltd. in ice cream business

3835. SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Nestle India Ltd., a multinational Company is preparing to enter in ice cream business;

(b) whether Government are aware that Nestle has already set up more than 200 chilling centres in the country; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI DILIP KUMAR RAY): (a) to (c) This Ministry is not aware about any plant of M/s. Nestle India Ltd. for entering into ice cream business/ or setting up of chilling centres. In accordance with the Ministry of Industries's Notification No. S.O. 298 (E) dated 3.4.1997, manufacture of ice cream has been dereserved from Small Scale Sector, and hence any company is now free to manufacture ice cream without any industrial licence under I (D&R) Act, 1951.

Reduction in Taxes on the Processed Foods

3836. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the Times of India dated 18th March, 1997 under the caption "Indian food processing industry at cross roads";

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether the heavy taxation on these processed food has made them highly expensive and also out of reach for the middle class households; and

(d) the measure Government propose to take to ensure reduction in taxes on the processed food?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SHRI DILIP KUMAR RAY): (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) to (d) Processed food industry has been growing steadily over the last few years. Undoubtedly levying of tax on a product would make it more expensive. However, Govt. has been taking various measures including fiscal concessions for promotion of this sector.

Processing of Fruits and vegetables in the country

3837. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of fruits and vegetables produced in the country and the percentages thereof which is being processed;

(b) the shortcomings in the proper growth of the industry; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to encourage modernisation of food processing industry as it has failed to register the desired level of growth despite the country being the world's largest producer of fruits and vegetables?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SHRI DILIP KUMAR RAY): (a) Production of fruit and vegetables in the country is estimated to be around 100 million tonnes. Proceesing of fruits and vegetables has increased from 0.5.% in 1988 to 1.8% in 1996 of the total production.

(b) and (c) While there is a great potential for growth of the industry, the slow growth can be attributed to factors such as lack of post harvest processing infrastructure, inadequate linkage between the farmers and the processors, and lack of marketing efforts etc. Government has been talking various steps for development of the Food Processing Industries including fruit and vegetable processing, which inter-alia includes liberlised policies for investment, including foreign investment, removal of restrictions thereon, providing fiscal concessions. Ministry of Food Processing